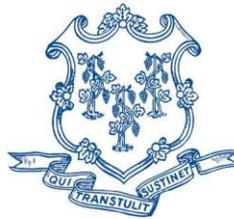


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State of Connecticut
SENATE

SENATE REPUBLICAN WHIP

RANKING MEMBER
HOUSING COMMITTEE
VETERANS COMMITTEE

MEMBER
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Testimony
Senator Paul Cicarella
Veterans' Affairs Committee
In support of SB 343, SB 345 & SB 347
March 8, 2022

Chairman Cabrera, Chairman Boyd, Vice Chair Maroney, Vice Chair Napoli, Representative Vail and distinguished members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee:

As a ranking member of this committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of **S.B. 343**: *An Act Concerning a Military Occupational Specialty Working Group and a Grant Program for the Reimbursement of Certain Licensing, Certification, Registration or Tuition Fees*; **S.B. 345**: *An Act Exempting Veterans from Payment of the Fares for Bus Public Transportation*; and **S.B. 347**: *An Act Crediting Military Training Crediting Military Training and Experience Toward Certain Licenses Related to Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems*.

I was pleased to again introduce **S.B. 345** and **S.B. 347** this session and join in support of **S.B. 343**. Each of these bills will benefit the men and women that served our nation and state with honor in the armed forces. My support for these important measures for our Veterans is best summarized by President Theodore Roosevelt when he said, "A man who is good enough to shed his blood for the country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards." These bills contribute to this "square deal" and support our Veterans in Connecticut by providing them with the access to jobs that is necessary for these men and women to thrive in the state's workforce. These bills are also directly in line with proposals that Senate Republican leaders and I introduced for [A Better Way to A Prosperous Connecticut](#). This plan is a comprehensive plan to revitalize job-growth and retention in the state.

S.B. 345 will promote a higher quality of life by also providing access to jobs by way of transportation. This bill removes the financial barrier of our public bus system for veterans, ensuring that these men and women have a means to get to work. Last year, I met with the Dept. of Veterans' Affairs Commissioner to discuss the daily challenges that our Veterans face. Employment is one such challenge and there is no question that transportation is necessary to find and retain a job in Connecticut. This bill seeks to provide this service to the well-deserving veterans in the state at a minimum to zero additional cost. It is very important that we provide our veterans with the ability to find and access work as we continue to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

S.B. 347 will make jobs more accessible to our distinguished veterans. Employment and quality of life go hand in hand. This is especially true for our veterans that face barriers to employment after completing their time as members of the armed services. Oftentimes, the experience that our servicemen and servicewomen gain during active duty is highly specialized and valuable in today's workforce. This bill will expedite the time that is necessary for veterans to gain state licensure by recognizing their existing experience and applying it to the state's requirements for accreditation. These men and women, with direct experience and skills, will therefore be able to find jobs more quickly in Connecticut.

Finally, **S.B. 343** will reexamine a study conducted a decade ago through [*Special Act No. 13-5*](#) to ensure that we have a system in place that allows servicemen and servicewomen to leverage their existing skills to obtain state licensure for professional, occupational and trade careers. Similar to S.B. 347, this measure enables Veterans to maximize their existing skills—perfected through service to this nation—to succeed in Connecticut’s workforce and drive our economy.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on these important pieces of legislation.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Cicarella". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "C".

Paul Cicarella
State Senator- 34th District